

# NEW INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN

DOCUMENTS OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL

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FRANCE : 1. THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN FRANCE ( Report )  
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GERMANY: S.A.P. on the HITLER PLEBISCITE

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LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

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VOLUNTARY LABOR





## F O R E W O R D

The recent decision of the Workers Party to enter the Socialist Party, on which we report elsewhere in this issue, brings sharply to the fore two opposing conceptions of what a party is, how to build it, what is unity and how it is to be achieved. Under the influence of the defeats of the proletariat since 1923 and particularly since Hitler's coming to power in 1933, a slow, profound and contradictory re-groupment of the forces of the labor movement is taking place, in two directions, leading toward a crystalization at two poles.

On the one hand, we see the beginnings of the concentration of the revolutionary forces into a solid, homogeneous revolutionary party under the slogan of the new, communist Fourth International. On the other, we see the liquidation of the revolutionary vanguard into the shapeless, jelly-like organizations of the masses under the banner of the People's Front.

Unquestionably to-day the tendency toward the concentration of revolutionary forces is lagging behind the tendency toward liquidation. The latter takes many forms: the "all-inclusive" Socialist Party, the Labor Party and the Farmer-Labor Party; the amorphous Stalinist-controlled Leagues and Citizens' Committees for this and that.

Trotsky proposes to obtain revolutionary results by opportunistic means, to build the Fourth International by entering into the parties of the Second International. This is the classic trait of centrism, the attempt to reconcile irreconcilables, revolutionary goals with opportunistic means, permanent revolution with a vacillating position between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, intransigent theory with capitulation to reformists in practice.

In the other countries where the Trotskyite groups have preceded the WP on the road of entry into the SP, the objective results have been disastrous. This policy has helped to consolidate the parties of the Second International, and to keep control in the hands of the reformists and centrists. It has led to the capitulation of left-wing elements like Pivert in France, even Spaak in Belgium, indirectly the RPPA here. These elements, apart from their own political weakness, were driven back into the Socialist Party by Trotsky's line of "entry" as against the Leninist line of breaking with centrists and reformists.

Second, it has helped to keep in the Stalinist Parties many elements who were more or less approaching Trotsky's position, but who turned away from him in disgust when he advocated joining the Socialist Party precisely when they were preparing to break with their own leadership for moving politically in the same direction.

Third, the "French Turn" politically demoralized Trotsky's own international grouping once they abandoned the principle of the independence of the revolutionists. The demoralization is seen most clearly in France itself, where the new policy was first applied in the summer of 1934. The "Bolshevik-Leninists" gave up the slogan of Soviets which they had advocated after the riots of February, 1934 and adopted that of "Constituent Assembly", extension of the right to vote for women and youth of 18 years. Particularly striking was their advocacy of the "Workers' and Farmers' Government", which they calmly admitted was nothing but a co-alition of Blum and Cachin. This slogan had been fought by Trotsky for years as against the Stalinist advocates. The French group denied the principle character of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. It has to this day not come out sharply against "Organic Unity". It has accepted without criticism Fred Zeller's formula of "A People's Front of Action".

Fourth, as against the shadowy hope of winning over the SP members to a revolutionary position, by adapting themselves to them first organizationally and then



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politically, is the very tangible organizational disintegration of the Trotskyite sections themselves, in the US, Belgium, France, Germany, Poland, Spain, Argentine, Brazil, etc., by splits or the falling-away of whole sections from the international center.

In view of this experience, the "French Turn" policy which has now been adopted by the WP must be regarded as an act of political bankruptcy which can lead only toward demoralization and liquidation, not to recrystallization around a revolutionary nucleus into a revolutionary party and the Fourth International.

In France itself, the report of the Union Communiste (split-off from the Trotsky group in 1933), which we report in this issue of the Bulletin gives ample evidence of the existing disintegration. The Trotsky group, now expelled from the French SP, is trying to form a new party, and is spreading illusions as to the "thousands of members" with which it will start. It is quarreling with the split-off Molinier group which also has pretensions to being a revolutionary party. In the meantime, it has called a conference for May 30, 1936, at which the question of the formation of a party will be discussed.

The document which the Union Communiste has submitted to this conference is of interest, not only because of its report on the position of various tendencies within the French labor movement, but also because it poses the question, "group or party?" and draws a necessary distinction between the two. It also takes a good position on the necessity of mass work and the creation of the revolutionary party as part of the revolutionary upsurge.

At the same time, its position on the formation of a party is itself sectarian and defeatist. It proposes indefinite discussion without a concrete perspective of organizational fusion of groups on the basis of a common revolutionary program. In other words, it tends to divorce organizational conclusions from theoretical discussion, for the sake of continuing the latter. This may be a reaction against the formation of paper parties and a paper International, but it is not a healthy reaction. It leads only to isolation and sterile scholasticism.

Finally, it is necessary to criticize sharply the particular shibboleth around which the group of the Union Communiste has crystallized - the notion that the "defense of the Soviet Union", no matter how qualified, is a counter-revolutionary slogan because the Soviet Union today is a capitalist state. We state on the contrary in the most categorical manner that the overthrow of the proletarian dictatorship in the SU, corrupted and degenerated as that dictatorship, has become, would be a blow at the entire world proletariat which would set the labor movement back for many years. So far every Stalinist and most Socialists will agree.

But the vital question is, "How do we defend the Soviet Union?" The Stalinists and social-democrats and the rest of the People's Front tell us, "We defend the Soviet Union by conciliating the bourgeoisie, by showing them that capitalism and 'communism' (i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat as it actually exists in the Soviet Union) can live peaceably side by side, that those terrible Russians are not so terrible after all but are good bourgeois themselves, who want peace, democracy, and the rest of the adornments of bourgeois republicanism".



We say on the contrary, "There is only one way to defend the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union. Only the proletariat and those allies whom it can sweep along behind it can defend the Soviet Union, against the bourgeoisie, and against the bureaucracy of the Soviet Union and the non-proletarian elements on whom it is increasingly relying for support. Only by the overthrow of our own bourgeoisie, only by the extension of the October revolution, can we defend the Soviet Union".

Maurin's article on the Spanish elections has considerable value, first of all because the Spanish situation is typically that of a pre-revolutionary crisis, even more sharply defined than that of France. It must result before long in a clear-cut decision, for fascism or for communism, for the proletarian revolution or the bourgeois counter-revolution. A victory for the revolution would give a tremendous impetus to the world proletariat.

The POUM, or Workers' Party of Marxist Unification, has broken with the Second and with the Third Internationals, and is orientated toward a new International. What content they give to this general formula is left ambiguous. In the first issue of this Bulletin we criticized the shortcomings of the program on which the POUM was founded. Since then, in spite of a growth in numbers and influence, the foundation of the theoretical monthly organ, etc., the fears which we expressed at that time are being confirmed.

Particularly the action of the POUM in joining the People's Front electoral bloc is a glaring un-Marxist error, particularly in so crucial a situation as that of Spain today. The fact that it criticized the People's Front bloc before the election, and broke with it after the election, does not alter the profoundly incorrect character of the policy, although it does break the point of Trotsky's hasty charge of "betrayal".

Lenin always used to ask, "What did they gain? What did they lose?". They gained a deputy in the Cortes - very good. But they lost the possibilities of the revolutionary use of electoral propaganda, of drawing a clear-cut line between revolutionary policy and the People's Front. The political loss in the long run is very heavy. Nor is it lightened by the position which Maurin takes in "explaining" the policy of participating in the People's Front bloc.

"It would have been fatal to stand aside", "We had to act quickly" - the classic expressions of centrism caught in a panic and hanging on to the skirts of the opportunists who control the masses. "The People's Front in Spain has nothing of the character of the People's Front in France". Why? Wherein is the political or principled difference?

"It is necessary to have a workers' government to intensify the revolutionary movement and drive on to the final struggle". But what is the "workers' government"? Is it anything else but the SP and CP and perhaps even the more or less radical petty-bourgeoisie? Then this is the abdication of the responsibility of the revolutionary party and resignation to functioning as a tail-end to the reformists and the centrists. Only the revolutionary party can take the leadership in "intensifying the revolutionary movement and driving on to the final struggle". Or does Maurin have in mind a government with the participation of "a revolutionary party" under the bourgeoisie, before the final struggle and the seizure of power?



"The Spanish working masses have overcome fascism", we are told. But all that happened was that the fascists were temporarily defeated at the polls. Decaying capitalism which breeds fascism, remains. Or is the struggle against fascism inseparable from the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, as we maintain, against the Stalinists and the People's Fronters.

It is clear that a serious process of clarification and differentiation within the ranks of the POUM will be necessary if the revolutionary elements within it are to be able to function toward building a revolutionary party and leading the Spanish masses to victory. Not by tolerating ambiguity on the international question, on the People's Front, on the necessity of the independent leadership of the proletariat, on parliamentary illusions, but by unremitting struggle for a clear revolutionary position will the revolutionists within the POUM be able to carry out their historic responsibilities.

The SAP manifesto against the Hitler plebiscite is only one of the series of manifestations of the encroachment of Stalinist tendencies within that organization. It is "classless" in the manner of the new Stalinist line, addressed to the German "voters", not the workers; it does not call for the leadership and independence of the proletariat in the struggle against capitalism, nor show the indissoluble connection between the struggle against fascism and the struggle against capitalism.

The statement, "the European powers which from a military point of view would come into question at all can wish nothing more than the maintenance of "peace" is nothing but the Litvinoff-Stalin line about the "peace-loving democratic nations" whom they counterpose to the "war-loving fascists" as actual or potential friends of the Soviet Union.

The demand "for peace", even "for socialism and peace", is the merest pacifism since it does not call for the revolutionary struggle against capitalist peace as well as against capitalist war, for the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war, for the overthrow of capitalism (not merely fascism alone) as the only means of ending imperialist war.

Finally, the policy of "Vote No !" is based on the short-term perspective that "Hitler will not last long", which the Stalinists, too, accept. For revolutionists who regard the struggle against fascism as a long-term task, involving the building of the revolutionary party under illegal conditions and the training of its cadres, the policy for the present period would be to abstain.

In the internal discussion bulletin of the SAP, the "Marxistische Tribüne", no. 2, the struggle among Stalinists, conciliationists and revolutionary tendencies on the question of war continues. Closely connected with the question of war are questions of the Soviet Union, the People's Front (including in Germany the question of the People's Front government as the successor to Hitler). On all these questions the lines are being drawn more sharply within the SAP.

With the increasing aggressiveness of the Stalinist tendencies, the task of the revolutionists within the SAP becomes more and more urgent: to clarify a revolutionary position on the question of the new Fourth International, the struggle against pacifism, the revolutionary estimation of the position and role of the Soviet Union, the perspectives of struggle within Germany, the struggle against concessions to the People's Front line, civil peace, "progressive war", and the other burning questions. It becomes increasingly necessary to differentiate their position from the line of Stalinism, or centrism and reformism, and to prepare to take independent action for the building of an international revolutionary center together with the revolutionary forces which are definitely orientated toward the Fourth International.



## JOINT STATEMENT OF

LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY  
REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE  
ITALIAN LEFT FRACTION OF COMMUNISM

(The following statement is part  
-- (of a joint document which is in  
course of preparation by the  
(three organizations mentioned as

(part of the joint discussions and negotiations which they are conducting with a  
(view to testing the possibilities of merger. It has been approved by all three  
(organizations involved, as representing points on which they are all in agreement.  
(On certain points, however, of a tactical nature, there are disagreements. On  
(the question of the IAG, particularly, the article elsewhere in this issue states  
(the position of the LRWP.).

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### THE WORLD LABOR MOVEMENT

The October Revolution of 1917 opened a new period in the history of the proletariat. The Russian proletariat under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party seized power and replaced the regime of feudal absolutism and the dictatorship of capitalism with the first dictatorship of the proletariat that has been able to maintain itself. The revolution spread from Russia to many other countries and opened a period of mighty revolutionary upswing and struggle for power. But because of the lack of real revolutionary parties, these struggles were not successful in any of the other countries, thus leaving the October Revolution isolated in the Soviet Union.

The fascist victory in Italy and the defeat of the proletariat in Germany (1922-3) marked a turning point in post-war history. The new phase was one of prolonged downswing of the revolutionary movement. It was opened by the formulation of the theory of "Socialism in One Country", which reflected the defeats and the isolation of the revolution. On the basis of this break with Marxism and the rising pressure of alien class forces in the proletariat within the Soviet Union, Stalinism arose to power within the Soviet Union and the Communist International. It introduced opportunist and revisionist tendencies into the revolutionary vanguard, disorientating and corrupting it. It led to a series of defeats and betrayals of the masses in England, China, and other countries. The most decisive of these defeats was the coming to power of Hitler in 1933, which sharply intensified the disintegration of the movement. The Communist International during this period abandoned the task of leading the world revolution and degenerated into a mere frontier guard of the Soviet Union.

The period of revolutionary upswing from 1917 to 1922-3 was marked by a tremendous increase of forces and influence of the revolutionary party among the proletariat, by the disintegration of the parties of reformism and centrism, by the increasing unification of revolutionary forces in the revolutionary party. The period of revolutionary crisis and downswing since 1922-3 has been marked by loss of forces and influence of the revolutionary (communist) movement, by the revival of reformist and centrist organizations, and by the disintegration of the revolutionary movement by splitting and re-splitting.

The World War of 1914 brought to a head the differences among the basic tendencies in the world labor movement: reformism, centrism and revolutionary Marxism.



Reformism is the instrument of the bourgeoisie in the camp of labor dividing the proletariat into national, craft and other groups. It aims to subordinate the proletariat to the bourgeoisie. In periods of sharp class struggle, it openly supports the bourgeoisie in smashing the revolution, thereby revealing its counter-revolutionary essence. Its classical representatives are the parties of the Second International.

Revolutionary Marxism represents the interests of the international proletariat as a whole, organizing the independent class activity of the proletariat, unifying its struggles on a national and international scale, and putting the proletariat at the head of the struggle of all the oppressed classes of society for emancipation. Its aim is the forceful overthrow of the capitalist system and the building of a socialist society. It participates in the struggles of the proletariat for immediate demands as a means to this end. Its classical representatives in this generation have been the Bolshevik Party and the Communist International under Lenin's leadership.

Centrism is the expression within the labor movement of the pressure both of the bourgeoisie and of the proletariat. This leads to a fundamental contradiction, to the attempt to reconcile irreconcilables - revolutionary aims with reformist means and to combine revolutionary phraseology and reformist practice. Centrism is, therefore, inherently unstable, vacillating between reformism and revolutionary Marxism, moving under certain conditions to the former, under others to the latter. In periods of the sharpening of the class struggle, it tends to disintegrate and its elements fly apart to the camp of the revolution or that of reformism. In other periods, it can temporarily consolidate itself, and even attract and entrap forces moving toward revolutionary Marxism. With all its vacillations, it tends on the whole to lean toward reformism rather than revolutionary Marxism, and thereby constitutes an obstacle on the road to revolution. The general designation "centrist" alone does not sufficiently characterize a tendency or movement - it is necessary concretely to specify what irreconcilables it is trying to conciliate, what is its general direction, how far it has travelled, etc. Centrism in its many varieties, is a subjective reflection in the labor movement of the objective situation of the petty bourgeoisie, crushed between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. We characterize as centrist such diverse tendencies as Stalinism, Austro-Marxism, ICL, IAG, WPUS, ILP, SAP, etc.

During the period of revolutionary upswing 1917-1923, the forces of revolutionary Marxism grew rapidly, attracting the forces of the proletariat away from reformism and centrism. Centrist organizations such as USPD and the 2½ International that arose during this period were short-lived and ended to a larger extent in the camp of the revolution rather than that of reformism.

In the period of decline of the revolutionary movement since 1923, reformism has been able to reconquer a large part of the ground which it lost to revolutionary Marxism. Centrist tendencies and groupings have arisen on the basis of the same soil, the defeats and the disorientation of the labor movement, and the absence of a powerful revolutionary attractive center.

### THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

The Second International arose and developed on the basis of the growth of capitalism and in close connection with the upswing of the bourgeoisie. Its growth was based not on its leadership in the class struggle but on concessions which the bourgeoisie was able to make during this period, in order to prevent these struggles from broadening out. The Second International was the agency of the bourgeoisie



which kept these struggles within the framework of the capitalist system.

Its basic policies which resulted from this were: class-collaboration, the splitting up of the labor movement, and the revision of Marxism into radical bourgeois ideology. Its class-collaboration policies were expressed in the trade-union field, in the formation and support of coalition governments, in the substitution of a belief in class harmony and gradual evolution for class-struggle and forceful revolution.

Being an instrument of the nationally-organized bourgeoisie, it organized the workers into national groups. As an international organization, it was merely a loose federation of such national groups, without international discipline. It separated the interests of the skilled workers, who constituted its social basis, from those of the unskilled workers, the agricultural workers and peasants, the colonial masses, taking no position and no part in the struggles of these masses.

It revised and broke with Marxism on a whole series of fundamental questions, accepting or tolerating revisionist and even radical-bourgeois conceptions of the state, of the road to power, of the priority of immediate demands over the revolutionary goal, and the subordination of the independent class role of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie and **petty bourgeoisie**.

The outbreak of the war revealed the corruption of the Second International in all its nakedness and the incompatibility of the basic tendencies of reformism, centrism and revolutionary Marxism. The dominant reformist current in the Second International not only sent millions of workers into war at the command of the national bourgeoisie but factually dissolved the Second International, with the objective support of the centrist elements who refused to recognize the betrayal of the reformist leadership and the necessity of a new revolutionary International.

Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and the revolutionary elements of the old parties of the Second International, the left wing split off during the period of 1919-1921. The Social-Democracy turned sharply to the right, now that their revolutionary elements had split away.

The open treachery of reformism during the war was completed and sealed by its armed suppression, hand in hand with the reactionary bourgeoisie, of the revolutionary elements in the post-war period.

In spite of the terrific blows which the revolutionary movement, during its period of upswing, dealt to reformism, the latter still retained enough influence among the masses of workers as to be able to carry out its role as an instrument of the bourgeoisie, resulting in the defeat of the proletariat in a series of countries. On the basis of these defeats, world capitalism was able to stabilize itself for a period of years, and thereby re-establish the conditions of relative social peace and economic stability under which the Social-Democracy was able to revive.

In 1929, the underlying general crisis of capitalism broke out into a new cyclical crisis of unexampled violence. In the countries constituting the weakest links of the imperialist chain, capitalism was no longer able to make the political and economic concessions which form the material pre-requisites for reformism. In Germany and Austria, the bourgeoisie put on the order of the day the withdrawal of the concessions already granted, the crushing of all expressions of the working class, the abolition of democratic rights, the slashing of the standard of living of the workers through fascism. Similar tendencies in a more or less clearly defined or urgent form, appeared in Spain, in France, and other countries.



Once again the Social Democracy was confronted with a social crisis of the first magnitude. But this time the question of its existence, that is, of its usefulness to the bourgeoisie, was at stake. In no case did it mobilize the workers for struggle against capitalism, although it reacted differently in the different countries.

In Germany, it capitulated without a struggle and resisting to the end any form of united front; in Austria, when it had virtually undisputed hegemony within the working class, it looked to the bourgeois state for support up to the very end, and finally called upon the workers to fight without preparation; in France, it turned, jointly with the Stalinists, to the liberal and radical bourgeoisie, turning over the masses of workers to its leadership; in Spain, having already lost the support of the left bourgeoisie, it fought for its life at the last moment unprepared and isolated.

Where these parties were forced to fight in the open, their subsequent policies proved that their basic character and function had not changed.

Nevertheless, the Social-Democracy has actually increased its hold over large sections of the working class. For a time, after the victory of Hitler, a process of disintegration set in within the Second International, and left-wing tendencies began to crystallize. The Second International recovered from this crisis on the basis of the illusions created by the struggles in Austria and Spain, of the adoption by the CI of the policy of collaboration with the Second International on the road to organic unity, and of the idealization of the character and possibilities of the parties of the Second International by Trotsky and the ICL ("French turn").

At the same time, many of the parties of the Social-Democracy adapted themselves to the left currents by assuming a left phraseology. The effect of all this was to arrest the development of the leftward moving elements and to consolidate the ranks within the Second International.

The Second International remains unchanged - the party of betrayal, executing the policies of the bourgeoisie within the labor movement. It cannot be reformed. Revolutionary elements within it must break with it politically and organizationally.

### THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

The betrayal and collapse of the Second International in 1914 posed before the revolutionists the question of building a new International. The necessity of this task was proclaimed by Lenin in 1914; the actual launching of the Communist International took place in 1919 on the basis of the victory of the October Revolution. The road to it was the unification of the revolutionists and their progressive separation from centrists and reformists, politically and organizationally.

It became the international organizational center for the revolutionary forces within and without the Soviet Union, for the maintenance and extension of the October Revolution. On the basis of the revolutionary upswing of the world proletariat and the successful civil war within the Soviet Union, it attracted layer after layer of new forces, many of which were never fully assimilated into revolutionary ideology and organization. The defeats sustained during this period were studied and their lessons learned so as to bring positive results to the world revolutionary movement.

From about 1923 on, however, the isolation of the revolution in the Soviet Union as a result of these defeats laid the foundation for the adaptation of the Communist International to the co-existence of the Soviet Union and the capitalist environment, under the name of "Socialism in One Country". The Communist International degenerated steadily into a mere frontier guard, serving the narrowly understood "national" interests of the Soviet Union.

For this reason, the evolution of the Communist International since 1923 reflected the developments of the class struggle within the limits of the Soviet Union, and not on a world scale. The policies of the Communist International became increasingly passive, tailendist, coming after the event, instead of active, Marxist foreseeing the event. The developments of the class struggle on a national scale within the Soviet Union under the conditions of the degenerating dictatorship came increasingly into contradiction with the level of the struggle on the international scale.

The degeneration of the Communist International, therefore, took the form of a series of zigzags in which the policies adopted for the world proletariat came into ever sharper contradiction to the objective requirements of the class struggle, reflecting conditions already past or the nationally-limited requirements of the Russian State. These zigzags expressed the pressure of the rising elements of the bourgeoisie, particularly of the peasantry in the Soviet Union and the imperialists without on the one hand, and that of the proletariat on the other. That is why we have characterized the regime of the Communist International under Stalin as centrism of a particular type, bureaucratic centrism.

But these centrist vacillations did not take place around a fixed axis. The axis itself moved to the right during this whole period. This was a necessary consequence, on the basis of the backwardness inherited from Tsarism, and the defeats of the world proletariat, the isolation of the October Revolution, the shifting of class forces toward the petty bourgeoisie within the Soviet Union. The axis of policy during this whole period has been the theory of "Socialism in One Country", which sets the defense of the Soviet Union apart from the extension of the October Revolution and therefore apart from the interests of the world proletariat. Once embarked on this course, Stalinism had no other recourse than to look for support sooner or later, in spite of all zigzags, to the world bourgeoisie, the only other major force in world society.

The steady shift to the right in policy was also expressed in a shift in social basis, in two ways: one, the fact that the Communist International represented more and more consistently the class interests of the petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie, and second, the fact that in its social composition, the alien class elements, more particularly the petty bourgeoisie came to predominate more and more.

The germs of bureaucracy existed from the very beginning of the Communist International as an inevitable holdover from capitalism. But in the degeneration of the Communist International, with the decreasing influence and participation of the proletariat, and the development of an increasingly autonomous State apparatus on the basis of the national isolation of the revolution, bureaucracy became integrally necessary to the right development of the Communist International as well as a dominant force furthering that development. It became the vehicle for the transmission of the increasing pressure of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat and of the weakening resistance of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Having its roots in the national state apparatus of the Soviet Union, the bureaucracy dominated the Communist International and all its parties.

The theoretical expression of the degeneration of the Communist International is the revision of Marxism on a whole series of fundamental questions; the international character of the proletariat and its revolution, the relation of class to party (Kuomintang), the nature of the capitalist state and democracy (People's Front), the road to power (democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry vs. dictatorship of the proletariat), the struggle against war (Amsterdam-Pleyel), and fascism, (Social-fascism, Leagues against War and Fascism), the character of the trade unions (red trade-unionism), etc. The continued revision of Marxism has brought the Communist International ideologically and politically to the position of the Social-Democracy.

The degeneration of the Communist International did not progress in a straight line nor without having to crush opposition within its ranks, and even within each phase there were contradictory movements. The first phase from 1923 to 1928 was characterized within the Soviet Union by the rise of the kulak and middle peasantry, the formation of the left wing and its crushing by the Stalinist center in coalition with the right-wing, and the elimination of the independent power of the Soviets, trade unions, etc. by the consolidation of the bureaucracy. Under the leadership of the latter, the world proletariat sustained a series of crushing blows in Germany, China, England, Bulgaria and other countries. This was the period of two-class parties, anti-imperialist parades, and the unprincipled blocs with reformists and liberals, the Peasant International, the Labor Party etc.

In 1928, a new period opened with the adoption of the 5 year plan, in face of the danger from the kulak and in response to the pressure of the proletariat. Under the conditions of the degenerated dictatorship, the necessary revolutionary policy of planned economy was distorted by the bureaucracy into its opposite - "Five year Plan in Four", and the enforced mechanical 100% collectivization of the peasants. In the international arena, these policies were translated into the "ultra-left" policies of the "Third Period", social-fascism, the united front from below only, red trade unionism, etc.

These policies together with the capitulation of the Social-Democracy led directly to the staggering blow of the accession to power of Hitler in Germany. This swung the policies of the Soviet Union and the Communist International sharply to the right and accelerated the trend toward capitulation to capitalism both in the Soviet Union and in the Communist International.

Devoid of any confidence or vital connection with the world proletariat, the Stalinist bureaucracy turned toward the bourgeoisie to "defend the Soviet Union". The entry into the League of Nations, the Franco-Soviet pact, the terms under which American recognition was negotiated, the People's Front, the approach to the Social-Democracy in the road to organic unity, mark the stages on the road to the political liquidation of the Communist International.

The degeneration of the Communist International is reflected in the increasing impotence and purely formal character of its World Congresses, as well as the increasingly long intervals at which they have been held. The first four congresses, during the period of revolutionary upswing, made great contributions to revolutionary theory and practice. The Fifth and Sixth Congresses marked the widening gap between Stalinism and Marxism, in which the Left Opposition under Trotsky consistently fought for a Marxist position; and the Seventh Congress signalized the final repudiation of the revolutionary tasks of the Communist International.

The Communist International has already been transformed from an organizer of the world revolution into a counter-revolutionary force and an objective ally of the world bourgeoisie. Like the Second International, it is not excluded that in



one country or another it may go through a period of organizational growth in spite of its political bankruptcy, as in Austria, France, United States. But it is necessary to state that the Third International, like the Second, cannot be reformed. It cannot lead the proletariat to revolutionary struggle, and it is the duty of revolutionary elements to break with it politically and organizationally.

### ORGANIC UNITY

Organic unity, involving a rejection of the Leninist method of building an international party, and thereby the condemnation of the split of 1919, has been the historic policy of the Second International. It also became the policy of Stalinism after the right swing to social patriotism and the support of "progressive" bourgeois governments.

We reject it as a method of subordinating the proletariat to the bourgeoisie and counterpose to it the building of a revolutionary international party expressing the independent class interests of the proletariat.

To unity for unity's sake, dissolving the party in the class, we counterpose the unity of the revolutionists in a vanguard party.

Organic unity would throw the revolutionary movement back to the formless condition of a hundred years ago. The People's Front is an integral part of the policy of organic unity. The Second International and the Third International cannot lead the proletariat in struggle against capitalism together in "organic unity" any more than they can separately. The road of organic unity can only end in the swamp of defeat.

### FOR THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

Upon the creation of a new communist world party, the 4th International, depends today the fate of the proletariat and humanity as a whole. Its foundations have to be laid today, not only in spite of, but precisely because of, the terrible disintegration which is sweeping through all tendencies of the world labor movement since the defeat of the German proletariat in 1933. A firm and clear vanguard, small as it may be, working for a new communist international is the only means to counteract the world-wide tide of disintegration. The Third International was actually created only upon the basis of a victorious revolution, and the same may be true for the Fourth International. But the victory of the proletarian revolution in Russia was possible only because the forces which were to direct it, had been prepared by years of struggle against opportunism and during the years of disintegration of the world labor movement after 1914 had steeled themselves by persistent struggle for a new International through the formation of the Zimmerwald Left. Today too, the task is the creation of a propaganda and organizing center for a new International, to gather and steel the forces which will have to work for a victorious outcome of the next upward swing of the working class movement. The actual creation of the new Communist International as an organization with objective influence in the class struggle, will be possible only on the basis of such a new upsurge.

Our concept of the character and rule of the Fourth International will have decisive influence upon our method of laying the foundations for it. It will have to be a communist world party based on democratic centralism. Its directing body will have to function as the general staff of the world revolution, on the basis of an international strategy to which the strategy for individual countries, including those in which the bourgeoisie has already been overthrown, will be subordinated. It will



stand upon the foundation of Marxism, as applied to our epoch in the fundamental positions of the first four Congresses of the Third International.

The road to such an International can be only that of unification of the revolutionary forces on the basis of principled agreement on a revolutionary program, and of the political and organizational separation of the revolutionary Marxists not only from reformism but from centrism as well.

These revolutionary forces exist, but, under the conditions of the disintegration of the revolutionary movement, they are isolated or submerged in centrist and to some extent even reformist organizations. While the revolutionary movement as a whole has been declining sharply, the class struggle creates again and again new tendencies and formations against the current which offer possibilities of fruitful work to revolutionists on condition that the independence of the revolutionary organization is maintained. It is necessary to approach centrist forces in the Leninist manner, combining intransigence of principle with flexible and well-timed tactics, avoiding ultimatism as well as opportunistic adaptation.

A loose federation of a centrist character like the London Bureau, composed of a heterogeneous group of organizations which have in common only the fact that they have broken with the Second and Third Internationals, but are in their majority not willing to work for, and in many cases, to not even recognize the necessity for, a new communist International, cannot become the propagandist and organizational center for the Fourth International. The revolutionary Marxists must create their own center and carry out a policy which will clarify, differentiate and separate the revolutionists from the centrists and reformists, thus removing the political basis of centers like the London Bureau and leading to the affiliation of the revolutionary forces in it to the independent revolutionary center outside.

The organizational work of the ICL under Trotsky has fundamentally been a failure because of a false approach to the various centrist currents which in this period constitute the main recruiting ground for the Fourth International. Its very first step, the attempt to involve leftward-moving centrist organizations in the work for the Fourth International, through the Declaration of Four, in August, 1933, was executed in a bureaucratic and sectarian manner which arrested the leftward movement of many centrist organizations, and welded the forces in the London Bureau closer together, increasing the confusion instead of leading to the crystallization of the revolutionary elements and their separation from the centrists and reformists, and thereby the disappearance of the political basis of the London Bureau.

Trying to escape out of its resulting isolation, the Internationalist-Communist League less than a year later, veered to the other extreme, that of outright capitulation, not only to centrism, but to reformism, by attempting to build the Fourth International through the Second International. In the execution of this line, which arrested the leftward movement of centrist currents, both inside and outside the Second and Third Internationals, even more than the former sectarian line had done, the Internationalist-Communist League has itself become a centrist organization and an obstacle on the road to the Fourth International and the revolution. It has been drawn into the disintegration which sweeps through the world labor movement. The attitude of the revolutionary Marxists toward the present ICL and its paper counterpart, the Contact Committee based on the Open Letter of July, 1935, must be essentially the same as toward the London Bureau (although the latter as a whole is farther to the right); to work for its polarization and for the affiliation of the Marxists in it to the independent international center to be



created by those who agree with us on a revolutionary program.

The first steps in this direction will have to be the political and organizational consolidation of our international tendency through such steps as the creation of an international bulletin and the calling of an international conference, aiming at the establishment of a propagandist and organizational center for the Fourth International.

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## F R A N C E

### CONTRIBUTION TOWARD THE DISCUSSION FOR A NEW REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

("Bulletin d'Informations et de Liaison" of the Union Communiste, No. 4, April, 1936)

We publish on the first page of this issue a resolution intended to reply to the two points put on the agenda of the "Preparatory Conference for a New Party", organized by the Bolsheviki-Leninist Group and the Revolutionary Socialist Youth, in which we shall participate with voice but no vote.

This conference is based on the platform published by the B.-L. Group and the R.S.Y. under the title of an "Open Letter". The conceptions developed in it, which we are asked to accept as a basis for discussion, seem to us mistaken almost in their entirety. That is why, in asking the two organizations not to limit their discussion to two meetings, for a problem so important and so vast as that of the new revolutionary party, we publish the following document which opposes to the "Open Letter" the positions of the Union Communiste on the international and the French situation, on the labor movement and its perspectives, on the immediate tasks of the vanguard.....

(The resolution referred to is the following) :

#### RESOLUTION PRESENTED TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE BOLSHEVIK-LENINIST GROUP AND THE REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST YOUTH OF MAY 30, 1936

##### The Present Situation and the Creation of a New Revolutionary Party :

The development of the People's Front means today increased submission of the French labor movement to the policies of the bourgeoisie.

The coming to power of the People's Front will give to capitalism the possibility of forcing the entire working population to accept its measures for super-exploitation, and dragging it into a new imperialist war.

The principal feature of the present situation is the almost unanimous acceptance by the workers of the policies of the treacherous organizations: socialist, communist and trade-union.

The immediate perspectives which the revolutionary vanguard must draw are therefore not those of a change in the immediate period, of the orientation of the labor movement by the sole fact of an oppositional propaganda and agitation.

The masses have lost confidence for the time being in direct action and in their own power, because of the defeats undergone by the world proletariat, and of

the political gymnastics carried on by the Stalinists before the formation of the People's Front.

The creation of a new revolutionary party therefore implies the realization of conditions which must be taken into account in order not to go into a new disappointing adventure. These are:

1. When the political death of the Third International will become an element in the class-consciousness of decisive layers of the proletariat.

2. When the working class will cease to retreat without fighting, will no longer limit itself to rearguard skirmishes, and will take up again the struggle against the bourgeoisie and its various forms of domination.

3. When one or more vanguard groups will show in action that they represent the interests and the will of the proletariat in its revolutionary offensive.

In the absence of these conditions, the creation of a new party will appear in the eyes of the masses as an empty agitation and a hopeless attempt.

### THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE VANGUARD

The object of these tasks is : to establish the political foundations, and to form the cadres, of a new revolutionary party, as well as to express to the eyes of the workers the continuation of the Marxist-Leninist current, the only representative of the revolutionary interests of the proletariat and of its victory of tomorrow.

To establish the political foundations of a new revolutionary party means:

1. To draw the lessons of the past experience, as to the organizational and political process of the degeneration and the defeat of the labor movement; as to the new means of domination, of pressure and of deception employed by international capitalism (fascism, USSR, "planism").

2. To understand on what foundations the new proletarian offensive will take place, and the reaction of the working masses against those criminally responsible for the defeats and against their dupery (bourgeois democracy, pacifism, reformism, from right and left, defense of the Soviet Union, etc.).

These political foundations for the awakening of the proletariat, which must be clearly pointed out, constitute the very foundations for the creation of a new party, which must represent a new historical period for the labor movement and not the imitation or the repetition of the preceding experience.

To create the cadres of the new party means to regroup the revolutionary militants on clear and intransigent political foundations :

1. By detaching from the existing big organizations those elements which are most class-conscious, by means of a serious and patient propaganda based on the political foundations of the vanguard.

2. By preparing the political cohesion and the regroupment of the various oppositional tendencies by means of regular contacts, realized:

In the trade-union field: by the participation of all the militants of all the groups in minority work.

In the field of discussion (at monthly or bi-monthly meetings): by studying in common the general political problems which are placed before the labor movement, and the study of the development of events and of the tasks which they impose. This discussion should result, each time that a political unity (? - Trans.) is reached, either in joint propaganda outside of the groups, or in the concrete preparation of the work which will be imposed on us under the conditions of war, of illegality and of



repression.

These concrete proposals constitute an attempt which must be realized before considering the creation of a new party.

These tasks of the revolutionary vanguard defined in this way, and the intransigent political foundations on which they rest, are the only ones that correspond to the present condition of the labor movement, the only ones that permit of a sharp break with the opportunist movement, the only ones capable of avoiding adventurism and discouragement and of not discrediting the concept of the revolutionary party, already dangerously compromised by the betrayals of the reformists and the Stalinists.

#### VOICES ARE RAISED AGAINST "SACRED NATIONAL UNITY".....TO INCREASE THE CONFUSION

The denunciation of the Locarno pact by Hitler has given rise to a general rehearsal of what will happen when war will actually arise out of the international political tension.

The People's Front, the big "workers' parties", the C.G.T. (reformist trade-union center - Trans.) have given the measure of their betrayal.

But, some will say, many voices have been heard against this betrayal. This chorus of voices of course can console certain militants who are inclined to be easily satisfied with fine pacifist and even pseudo-revolutionary phrases.

As far as we are concerned, such a cacophony is far from reassuring to us. All these voices which have been raised against the Sacred Unity are so confused that they reflect the impotence and the practical non-existence of the revolutionary movement.

In fact, let us try to pass in review the reactions which have been displayed against the policy of betrayal of the workers' organizations.

Pacifists- If one reads "Le Barrage" or "La Patrie Humaine", one finds nothing but purely platonic protests against war. The methods to prevent war which are advocated are as utopian and dangerous as ever, for they consist in betting on the League of Nations whose actions, after all, should have opened the eyes of even the blindest. In reality, these pacifist protests and appeals for disarmament can only play the game of governmental demagoguery and of the treacherous leaders of the working class. And one even sees the "Canard Enchaîné" (issue of March 25) congratulating the Jouhaux of 1936, who at times can compete in pacifist phrases even with the "Patrie Humaine".

Syndicalists- The leaders of the "Revolution Proletarienne" who have been for some years Jouhaux's sharpshooters, and who approved the resolution on orientation at the Toulouse conference, permit themselves to speak seriously of struggle against the "Sacred Unity". The Congress of Toulouse was "a very good congress" according to Hagnauer, but Chambelland, who has the same opinion, now has to point out that the union with Jouhaux is a little too compromising and that the unanimity is broken. "It is a lesson", he says in an article inspired by the one in "L'Avant-Garde Syndicale" which denounces the resolution of the Committee of the C.G.T. The Syndicalists will continue to have many more such lessons as long as they will continue to see in the trade-unions the totalitarian organization of the working class.

At Toulouse, the militants of the Proofreaders' Union tried to bring up for discussion a resolution against war, a resolution of anarchist inspiration. These militants, after the denunciation of the Locarno pact, defended their resolution, slightly amplified, in the Paris District.

Approved by various trade-unions, the resolution was published as a pamphlet. As if 1914 had not taught us a lesson, the resolution advocates the general strike. But that in order to prepare, organize and lead the general strike it is necessary first of all to drive the Jouhauxs and Racamonds out of the leadership, of this, the resolution says nothing. No more does it say anything about the People's Front, to whose program the Congress of Toulouse has rallied. Not a word to condemn the resolution of the Committee of the C.G.T. of March 11. Finally, this resolution is nothing but dangerous babbling because it does not show that the first obstacles to overcome in order to struggle against war are the present workers' leaders and the present orientation of the trade-union organizations.

Intellectuals and writers of the left- A number of initiative steps have been taken by intellectuals and writers of the left.

For example we have received a document signed by comrades like Marcel Martinet, J. Bernier, A. Breton, etc. This document is entitled, "Workers, You Are Being Betrayed!" But the signers are satisfied merely to point out this betrayal and call for the signing of their statement. What do they want? They do not say. And when one observes that among the signers are Monatte and Lucie Colliard, who according to "La Revolution Proletarienne" rejoice at the unanimity of Toulouse, we can only be sceptical as to the manner of understanding the struggle against war which these comrades will explain to us. Besides, in the Committee Against War and Sacred Unity, as in the Conference of St. Denis, we have been able to learn the conceptions of Bernier, Lucie Colliard, Monatte, etc., which are those of the syndicalists. Therefore on this side too - complete confusion.

Nouvel Age - Another group of intellectuals. Their pamphlet-issue of March 12 which speaks of nothing less than the Golden Age is one of the most confusionist of all.

Hitler, "one of the greatest madmen of history", is presented as Satan in person "who has communicated his frenzy" to the whole German people! On the other hand, there is no mention of the warlike policy of French imperialism, which is simply swallowed up among the authors and continuers of the Versailles Treaty, which the "Nouvel Age" reproaches for having caused the Hitlerite frenzy. No attack on the Socialist or Stalinist party, no attack on the CGT, nothing on the People's Front. All this is replaced by a delirious appeal for the revolution which will bring in the Golden Age. In fact, this manifesto is of the most dangerous kind. It contains absolutely nothing which rests on the idea of the class struggle. There is even sketched out a criticism of revolutionary defeatism, under the excuse that "the French territory is the battleground for socialism and for democracy." The social-democratic leaders of France and Germany said nothing else in 1914 - and they had the advantage of knowing how to use a more "Marxist" phraseology than the "Nouvel Age".

Socialist Left - No. 1 of the paper "Le Drapeau Rouge" gives us the position of the "revolutionary left" of the Socialist Party. Many fine revolutionary phrases. But M. Pivert, like the pacifists, speaks of demilitarized zones of 50 kilometers on each side of the frontiers, of disarmament and other stories of the same kind. But "Le Drapeau Rouge" comes out for the defense of the U.S.S.R., for the ratification of the Franco-Soviet pact, for the winning over of the majority of the Socialist Party, for the unified party of the pro-



proletariat (organic unity - Trans.). If that is fighting against "Sacred Unity", no, thanks!

"Que Faire?" - These comrades, who have hardly just renounced the reform of the Stalinist parties, consider Hitler as the leader of international capitalism against the U.S.S.R. They are naturally tightly attached to the defense of this Soviet Russia, in spite of its alliances with the imperialist powers. As a result, their denunciation of "Sacred Unity" remains purely theoretical and verbal, and even very difficult to express. These comrades in reality are in the midst of a political evolution and we must wait in order to obtain any clear-cut ideas from them.

Communist International Party - Paper, "La Commune" - the same super-revolutionary phrases as the Socialist Left. But they call on the workers to gather around the C.I.P. One asks, to do exactly what? If it is to bawl against war, it is not worth while. Can this "party" intervene in a decisive manner in the class struggle? Does it correspond to a mass current of dissatisfaction of the socialist and communist workers against their parties? Not at all. Bluff, noise, adventurism; it is not these that will help the revolutionary movement to arise again.

Bolshevik-Leninists and Revolutionary Socialist Youth (J.S.R.) - The two last issues of "Revolution" are significant, and particularly the latest one, which contains an article by Trotsky on the Japanese attacks on Manchuria.

These comrades remain obstinately attached to the defense of the Soviet Union. They repeat the same things about Hitler as the militants of "Que Faire?" If they continue to be so attached to the defense of the U.S.S.R., these comrades will find themselves completely disarmed in fighting the "Sacred Unity". And if the world war began, for example, by a conflict between Japan and the USSR, we would see them, as they advocate in their pamphlet, "The Fourth International and War", demanding that the proletariat stop any effective class struggle in the countries which will support the USSR.

"For example, it would be absurd and criminal, in case of war between the USSR and Japan, for the American proletariat to sabotage the shipment of American arms to the USSR. Nevertheless, actions of this kind - sabotage, strikes, etc. - would be absolutely obligatory for the proletariat of a country which is in conflict with the USSR.

("The Fourth International and War")

On the other hand, the B.L. and the J.S.R. are competing with "La Commune" in trying to form a new party themselves, which can only aggravate the discredit which such enterprises create within the proletariat as to the conception of the regrouping of the revolutionaries.

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To sum up, the confusion which was shown at the Conference of St. Denis last summer has been continued and even aggravated. Some have even become panicky.

We are not surprised at this. As we said at St. Denis, and later within the Committee against War, and later still outside of this Committee, the struggle against war is the revolutionary struggle against the regime. Therefore, in order to claim that one is struggling effectively against war, one must try to solve the problems which are posed before the revolutionary proletarian movement.

Besides, all those who are opposed to war inevitably differentiate themselves when they leave the domain of pacifist or pseudo-revolutionary phrases. Some return to their syndicalist conceptions and fall into the arms of Jouhaux, others do

not want to break the unity of the S.P. and play the game of Blum and Company, certain ones, not wishing to understand that the USSR has become a counter-revolutionary force, obstinately continue to defend it, thus serving the Stalinists and the French bourgeoisie.

In short, the problem still remains the same; since war has been made possible only because the proletariat is crushed, the revolutionists must help the workers to return to the road of revolutionary struggle and prepare the ideological and practical arms for this struggle. Then we are faced with the questions of the formation of new class organizations and the elaboration of political positions which can lead to victory when the masses will have broken with their present leaders.

To help this break, by the pitiless denunciation of the policies of the People's Front, of the parties and of the C.G.T., and of all those who more or less worship at the altar of these policies, this is the primary task of the moment for revolutionists.

Finally, while avoiding a fall into adventurism, it is likewise necessary to prepare for the revolutionary party of tomorrow by a broad and permanent discussion among vanguard militants and by a practical activity in proportion to the real forces of this vanguard. It is also necessary to prepare to continue this work during the war which the present condition of the labor movement makes inevitable. It is the duty of the militant revolutionists who are conscious of their historical responsibility.

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#### THE SITUATION IN SPAIN

"THE REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT WILL FAIL AND A WORKERS' REVOLUTION SHOULD FOLLOW."  
(Bulletin of the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity (IAG), April, 1936).

(The Author of this article, J. Maurin, is the leader of the Workers' Party for Marxist Unity. He was elected to the Spanish Parliament in the recent election.).

The elections which took place on February 16th cannot be considered ordinary elections. They took place after about 30 months of reactionary Government, and, above all, they were the first elections since the rising of October, 1934.

It was a question of establishing a Government of Azana or Gil Robles, that is to say, of the Liberal or of the reactionary classes. Indeed, the issue went very much deeper: it was of extraordinary importance. In the electoral battle of February 16th the real question at stake was whether the revolution which commenced in 1930 should proceed toward the triumph of the working class or whether, on the other hand, it was to retreat towards Fascism.

The marvellous triumph of the Republican Workers' Alliance of the Left, has cleared the whole perspective. The Revolution, after having been paralyzed for more than two years, is again on the march.

In fact, the elections were nothing but a continuation in legal form of the revolutionary movement which had so far attained its highest manifestation in October, 1934. The Revolution has entered on a new phase.



The Workers' Party of Marxist Unity, which resulted from a coalition of the Workers' and Peasants Block and the Left Communists, formed part of an electoral coalition consisting of the Socialist Party, the Socialist Youth, the Communist Party, the General Union of Workers and the Syndicalist Party, on the one hand, and of the Left Republican Party (Azana), the Republican Union (Martinez Borrio) and the Independent Left Republicans of Catalonia.

It should be emphasized that all, absolutely all, the workers' parties joined the coalition. The anarchists, while abstaining as an organization because of their political theories, nevertheless, voted unanimously for the candidates of the Workers Republican Coalition.

The Workers' Party of Marxist Unity would have preferred the working class parties not to have allied themselves with the democratic parties of the Left. It pointed out that by this alliance the Socialist Party had reversed the policy it adopted after the rising of October, 1934. They advocated a strengthening of the Workers' United Front Movement (the Workers' Alliance) without any Capitalist allies.

The Socialist Party, after going through a great internal crisis, threw over its post-1934 policy. At the same time the Communist Party conducted an intense propaganda campaign in favor of Spanish People's Front to include the Liberals, as in France.

The attitude of the W.B.M.U., had considerable support from the masses in spite of the opposition of the Social Democratic and official Communist leaders. But it would have been fatal to stand aside. The political situation was falling to pieces about us, the hour of the election was upon us.

The Fascist forces hoped to win a complete victory in the election. To a great extent the future course of the Revolution depended upon the result. The fight was of decisive importance.

In addition to the effect of the decision of the Socialist and Communist Parties, there was the fact that the electoral law in Spain requires majority votes, which gives great advantages to large coalitions.

Under such circumstances the Workers' Republican Electoral Coalition was formed. It has nothing of the character, however, of the People's Front in France. It was an electoral pact with a series of demands beginning with an amnesty to political prisoners.

The Workers' Republican Front in Parliament is constituted as follows: Workers parties, 125 places. Left Republicans Parties, 151. The Workers' representation is as follows: - Socialist Party 88, Communist Party 15, Socialist Union of Catalonia 15, C.P. of Catalonia 1. Catalanian Proletarian Party 1. Independent Syndicalist, 1. Peasants' League 2. Workers Party of Marxist Unity 1, Syndicalist Party, 1.

The W.P.M.U. only nominated one candidate. I stood for the city of Barcelona and was elected. Our part in the contest was restricted in this way partly because of the opposition of the Communists to our inclusion in the United Front, and partly because the Socialists preferred to support Republicans rather than our Party.

In the new Parliament, Azana's Government depends on the vote of the workers' representatives. Whilst the policies of the Government coincide with the wishes of the people, its life will continue. But it is not likely that this situation will last long.

Azana's Government, under the influence of the bourgeois classes in society, will end in 1936 as it ended in 1933. It will make concessions to the bourgeoisie and will lose the support of the working class masses.

What will happen then? The position will be favorable for the formation of the Workers' Government, which will intensify the revolutionary movement and drive on to the final struggle.

The Spanish working class masses have overcome Fascism. They have noticed the happenings in Germany and Austria. They understand that the final alternative is Fascism or Socialism, and they are consciously directing themselves to the Socialist Revolution.

There is no doubt that the next few months will see some vital political and social struggles in Spain. The reactionary forces, although thrown into confusion in their unexpected electoral defeat are maintaining their economic position and will make great efforts to re-establish themselves so as to take the offensive quickly.

At the moment the bourgeoisie are overcome with fear and do not dare to move, but they are not yet defeated. The working class will still have to fight severe battles in order to overthrow them completely. It is evident that this social struggle will take place not in Parliament but outside it.

Parliament from 1931 - 33 was a brake on the Revolution. From 1933-35 it was an anti-revolutionary instrument. Now Parliament returns to the duty of fulfilling the paper promises of 1931-33.

Spain, the scene of repeated revolutionary struggles, has entered, since the defeat of the reactionary forces on February 16th, on a period of the greatest interest for the international working class movement. The prospect of a Socialist Revolution in Spain is now no Utopia, but real possibility. To convert this possibility into an actual fact is the duty of the Spanish workers.

J. MAURIN

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U.S.A.:

THE WORKERS PARTY ENTERS THE S.P.

A Report on "Progress" of the Liquidation

The Workers Party convention held February 29, 1936, was the culmination of sixteen months of preparation to enter the Socialist Party. The merger which took place in December, 1934, brought together the following heterogeneous elements: representatives of "revolutionary Americanism", the anti-French Turn'ers, the intellectual parlor radicals of the Hook-Calverton type, together with the various elements who lean on the I.C.L., although representing conflicts on many aspects of the application of the French Turn.

The deck was cleared the first nine months of those aforementioned elements, first the representatives of Americanism who steadily drifted to the Stalinist



(C.P.), beginning with the opening up of the ideological fight by Budenz, and culminating in the splitting of Johnson, Truax, Hallett and Reich, before the 1936 convention.

The anti-French Turn<sup>ers</sup> who were willing to leave the solution of their principle differences drag along until the first convention were confronted with the attacks on their position by the leading bodies and the official press of the W.P., which was supported by the I.C.L. and Trotsky, with which the W.P. had formally, only fraternal relations. By October, 1935, Oehler and his group were posed with the problem of either giving up their principled position (Capitulating in principle) or fighting. They were summarily expelled by the October Plenum. Before the 1936 convention, the last remnants of the French Turn opponents consisting of Larry Cohen, Jane Ogden, Frances Drake and 11 supporters were expelled and barred from attending the convention.

The intellectual parlor radicals became impatient with the slow tempo and the necessity to bicker with the different groups and jumped ahead of the W.P. into the S.P. Among this type were such dillettantes as Mendelsohn, who had gone over from the Oehler group to the Cannon group back and forth, ending finally in his entrance into the Socialist Party ahead of the Workers Party. These latter elements have been expelled from the W.P., but will most likely attempt to cover themselves with the "prestige" of being adherents of Trotsky in the S.P.

In the consolidation of the elements leaning on the I.C.L. and Trotsky which took a period of sixteen months, the development was not even. The conflicting factions of Cannon, Muste-Weber-Abern-Spector were welded together for the entrance into the S.P. by the orders of Trotsky through the cable printed in the "Fighting Worker" and the final orders of Trotsky to Spector. The latter visited him as a representative of the Muste-Abern caucus, Weber having in the meantime deserted his caucus for Cannon's. Trotsky in no uncertain manner (categorically), told Spector that no matter what he might inform Trotsky as to the role and actions of Cannon-Schachtman, he was behind them because they were going into the S.P., (carrying out his orders). He also assured Spector that he relied on the loyalty of Muste and would under no conditions break with him at the present time. This last assertion he made in order to assure himself of the final support of Muste for the policy of entrance into the S.P. The vote at the convention of the W.P. on entrance, was 50 for (Cannon), and 20 tactically opposed (Muste). The new National Committee is the steering committee for taking the W.P. membership into the S.P., and is composed of 15 Cannonites, Musteites, and Weber. At the convention, the Musteites as a caucus were tremendously weakened by the capitulation of their Allentown supporters to the Stalinists.

At the Spartacus Youth League Convention, there was no fight because all the conflicting elements had already been tied by the decisions of the W.P. convention. The resolution against entry which was legally presented in the S.Y.L., by Jane Ogden, member of the National Committee, was not sent out until after the delegates of the branches had already been elected.

The "New Militant" carried no announcement of the convention, no pre-convention discussion, no announcement of any mass-meetings in connection with the convention. The report of the convention gives no inkling of any decision to enter the S.P. It merely quotes a resolution "to watch developments in the S.P.". This is pure hypocrisy, because it is obvious that an important split (the present RWL) did not take place merely because the dissenting members refused "to watch developments in the S.P."

The articles which have appeared in the "New Militant" on the S.P. Militants and their activities, such as Gus Tyler's debate with Gil Green of the YCL at the time of the convention, and other articles since, have been purely conciliatory and devoid of criticism. This fits in with reports that the WP members in joining the SP have been instructed not to "Bolshevize" the party too rapidly.

### Applying the Line of the Convention

For the first few weeks after the convention, the inactive semi-liberal elements of the membership, which had relapsed into indifference, suddenly came back to life and packed the membership meetings which approved their entry as individuals into the SP. Once this wave was over, membership meetings and even caucus meetings of those in the SP were abandoned. Instead small groups were formed, each receiving instructions from their designated leader. The sum and substance of these instructions are to stand pat and do nothing until the SP convention in May, so as not to embarrass the "Militants" before the Old Guard.

The hollowness of the excuse that the WP policy is based on the leftward movement of the SP in the U.S.A. is shown by the fact that the membership was to be liquidated into the SP before the May convention, no matter what the outcome of the relations (so-called "fight") between the Old Guard and the Militants. The entry of the leadership of the WP would be determined by the outcome of the May convention.

The report that the "New Militant" would exchange editorial staff members with the Socialist Call is somewhat confirmed by the current (April 25, 1936) issue of the "New Militant". In this issue Sidney Hertzberg of the SP "Militants", a contributor to the American Socialist Monthly, signs an article on Tampa.

Incidentally, the same issue carries the announcement that the "New Militant" the "New International" and the Workers Party will henceforth all be housed in Room 1010 of the office building at 100 Fifth Avenue, to which all correspondence should be addressed. From a national organization to a letter-box in sixteen months - that is the record of the WP.

### Position on the Labor Party

The old CIA had always had a weak and vacillating position on the question of the Labor Party. Its 1929 Conference came out for it, the 1931 Conference, against it, but accepted a thesis which stated that reformist and centrist organizations had great possibilities of growth in the near future. In 1932, Trotsky published an interview in the New York Times which apparently took the position that one should not take the initiative in forming a Labor Party, but might join it as an organization if it represented a progressive step, but not if it is a scheme of the bureaucracy to head off the formation of a revolutionary party.

The problem became acute since the CP, early in 1935, unexpectedly announced its advocacy of the Labor Party, first with and then without the adjective "revolutionary", and later the Farmer-Labor Party, which for the last few months has become the central slogan of the CP, the panacea for all ills. Instead of denouncing this policy as the American expression of the People's Front, the WP press has either kept silent on the question, or, lately, out of deference for the Militants, has spoken of it in terms such as "We are opposed to a Farmer-Labor Party in 1936 (the Militants also do not want it in 1936, but in 1940, hence their difference with the CP which wants it right away), or "We are opposed to a paper Farmer-Labor Party" (also the Militants, who want a "real" Farmer-Labor Party), very much like Fred Zeller in France, who wants "a People's Front of action". Nowhere an analysis and



rejection of the People's Front - Farmer-Labor Party concept in principle.

Under the whip of the SP "Militants", the WP delegates by their silence, supported the SP-CP-CPO bloc at the United May Day Conference of April 25. On the other hand, the LRWP in a bloc with five other organizations and a number of rank-and-file delegates fought against the class-collaborationist Manifesto of the Conference and its Farmer-Labor Party slogans.

#### The Spartacus Youth League

The S.Y.L. was liquidated as an organization even while the WP still carries on a nominal existence. The system of groups receiving instructions from designated leaders is the means by which the Cannon-Schachtman line is transmitted to the former members.

The confidence which the Militants give their new allies is strikingly illuminated by the following episode. Ann Kracik was one of a group of eleven YPSLs who were working as a fraction of the Trotskyites. She was expelled about a year ago on charges based on this fact. Having returned to the YPSL via the SYL, she has now been made organizer of a YPSL circle.

Along the same lines is the decision of the N.E.C. of the YPSL that outsiders must come in as individuals and that leaders of such liquidating organizations must pass the approval of the N.E.C. after six months' probation. It appears therefore that the YPSL-Militant apparatus is taking its precautions, but feels it has little to fear.

The work of the SYL members in their new capacity as YPSL's has its humorous side. In one Harlem circle all the activity consists of social affairs and parties, while the Spartacus members give out leaflets to build the YPSL. In another circle some 30 Spartacus members were concentrated, and found four actual YPSL members, two Stalinists and one or two Lovestonites. In still another circle, two bold young Spartacus members entered with the announcement that they regarded the Militants as a progressive tendency and proposed to revolutionize them - only to find that the circle was one of the Old Guard circles belonging to the Federation which the Old Guard had split off from the YPSL. The Old Guard "New Leader" reports the episode with great glee.

#### Out-of Town Branches

In Minneapolis, the American stronghold of the Fourth International, where the successes of the WP were supposed to have kept Stalin awake at night according to Trotsky's pamphlet on the Kiroff assassination, there were 60 WP members and an SP local of 12 members. The WP, which had already months ago come out in support of the Farmer-Labor candidate for Mayor (and for the Fourth International) in Minneapolis, joined the SP branch. The liquidation of the Boston branch, of Paterson, etc., presented no particular difficulties either.

In Allentown, the branch had been built up by the Musteite politically backward activists, who followed Budenz into the CP; similarly the majority of the small Utica branch. In San Francisco and other branches, the inactive W.P. members, trained only in abstract discussion, hurriedly closed up their branches to join the SP.

From the very formation of the W.P., based on its program, policies and leadership, we could predict no bright future for it. The whole result of the merger was that the old CLA split into two parts, one joining the SP and the other continuing independently against the wishes of Trotsky. The old Muste group, frustrated in its efforts to build a centrist party in the U.S., lost its rank and file to the C.P. with Muste bereft of his following, joining Cannon in the SP.

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## GERMANY:

### MANIFESTO OF SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY (S.A.P.) ON HITLER PLEBISCITE

#### HITLER MEANS WAR !

From the very first moment when Hitler and his crew undertook to defend the interests of German imperialism, all their domestic and foreign policies served for the preparation of war.

In order that fascist Germany might become the strongest military power in the world, its foreign trade, its foreign exchange, food supplies, its entire national economy had to be put at the service of rearmament. For the sake of rearmament, the German workers were enslaved, and their boys and girls driven into compulsory labor or farm service. In order to make Germany independent of foreign countries in time of war, the peasant was forced into a tight network of rules and regulations, and a host of parasites was sent to feed on his body. In order that fascist Germany could be made into a single huge munitions factory, every free word, every independent thought, was choked off, and the whole public life of Germany was put under the dictatorial rule of Goebbels. For the sake of rearmament, fascist Germany has so violated the laws of capitalist economy, to which it nevertheless remains subject, that it is inevitably being driven to the point where its rules will have to choose between breaking off an armament race which has become as impossible as it is without perspectives, or unleashing a hopeless war.

In order to prepare, diplomatically and psychologically for war, Hitler has been talking for years about peace. Let no one be deceived ! The statements of the German rulers, that Germany is being threatened from any side, is a lie. The European powers which from a military point of view would come into question at all can wish nothing more than the maintenance of European peace.

Hitler lies when he speaks of peace. Hitler is the most dangerous force driving toward war. Hitler is making all the preparations, in alliance with the Japanese war criminals, after a second Reichstag burning to cover the neighboring peoples with war. In order to prepare you psychologically for war, they are proposing that you collaborate as stage supers in a huge comedy, in an atmosphere heated by the tearing-up of the Locarno treaty, that blow of the fist against France. The Nazis call you to vote for the Reichstag. But in present-day Germany there is neither a Reichstag nor a vote. The so-called Reichstag deputies, in whose election the voters have not the least influence, a well-paid claque whose business it is to clap applause and raise their hands on order. To this comedy there is only one answer :

NO !

The German population is supposed to support further the "peace" policy of



of the Fuehrer with its vote. In reality, every vote that is given for it serves to prepare for war.

But every "No" vote is a proof that the voter has seen through the swindle, that he detests war and that in fact and truth he wants peace.

Therefore vote against Hitler !

Vote No ! and you vote for peace !

The Nazis will falsify the results of this vote too, as they have falsified all the preceding ones. Let them ! But they will not lie to themselves. And when they have to recognize that in spite of all the terror, in spite of all the fake mass moods, and all the lies

MILLIONS VOTE NO !

that will show them in the most impressive way that they are risking everything when they take refuge in war.

DOWN WITH FASCISM AND CAPITALISM !  
LONG LIVE SOCIALISM AND PEACE !

VOTE NO !

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#### FRANCE:

#### REVOLUTION OR COUNTER-REVOLUTION

(Article I of a Series)

For over two years the political crisis in France, based on the catastrophic disintegration of French economy, has been maturing. Radical regroupments, changes of policy, realignments and new orientations have taken place. The political consciousness of the French masses is extremely high, and the international and national developments have made them highly receptive to the maneuvers of the politicians. Parliamentarism is on the wane in France. It cannot be saved even by the traditionally democratic and individual temper of the French masses. General strikes, riots, street clashes between the "left" and the "right" reveal clearly the ever-narrowing base of bourgeois democracy in France. The present pre-revolutionary situation is rapidly approaching a crisis (and the current elections may give some indication of the trend of events) which can be solved only by the progressive solution — the proletarian revolution; or the reactionary solution — the fascist counter-revolution. Revolution or counter-revolution — this posing of the question, which is crystal-clear for the Marxists, is becoming clearer to the population of France. The hammer blows of the continually-deepening internal crisis and the maturing war crisis have lifted the class struggle onto a higher plane. In order to understand the complicated movement of forces, which confuse the electoral picture, and in order to evaluate the possibilities of the favorable variant taking place, it is necessary to examine in some detail the programs and policies of those who say that they wish to stop fascism in France.

Following close upon the heels of the united front between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party ( a result of the new orientation of Soviet diplomacy

due to the victory of Hitler in Germany) the "Front Populaire" or People's Front was established. This extended the collaboration of the Social-Democratic and Stalinist bureaucracies (based on a non-aggression pact) to the liberal sections of the bourgeoisie. The dominant parties in the People's Front are the Radical Socialist Party (Daladier-Herriot), similar to the old Progressive Party in the United States, which has been for years the political instrument of French imperialism; the Socialist Party (Blum), one of the larger sections of the Second International, the classic agent of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of the labor movement; and the Communist Party (Cachin-Thorez), at present the largest section of the Communist International outside of the Soviet Union. Extremely important in the People's Front are also the Trade Unions (now merged) led by Jouhaux and other patriots, who betrayed the workers to French imperialism in 1914, and are always prepared to do their duty by the bourgeoisie. In addition, there are smaller political parties even more reformist than the Socialist Party, and the League for Human Rights, the Vigilance Committee of the Anti-Fascist Intellectuals, the World Committee Against War and Fascism (Amsterdam-Pleyel), etc.

### People's Front Shaky?

Naturally, such a bloc is extremely unstable and must be based on the least common denominator. In practice this means that the Radical Socialist Party dominates the People's Front, and has used it to strengthen its weakening electoral support—and with good results so far. Hence the program of the People's Front is the most innocuous collection of demands and reforms that could be imagined. It wishes to "defend liberty," to disarm the fascist leagues "in accordance with the law", "the putting into operation of the provisions of the law in the event of incitement to murder or attack on the security of the State", "the reform of the press by the adoption of legislative measures," It is for trade union rights, for "school and freedom of conscience," etc. The People's Front is for the "defense of peace" by manifestoes, disarmament, repudiation of secret diplomacy, the extension of the principles of the Franco-Soviet Pact, the nationalization of the war industries and the abolition of the private manufacture of arms, and "international collaboration within the framework of the League of Nations for the purpose of collective security, by designation of aggressor and automatic and all-around application of sanctions in the event of aggression." Its economic demands consist of reforms within the framework of capitalism, based on the fallacy of "restoration of purchasing power destroyed or reduced by the crisis." The entire program is at bottom that of the Radical Socialist Party and can prevent neither war nor can it restore the shattered economy of France.

We can expect, therefore, nothing from the People's Front but the ideological and physical disarming and disorientation of the French proletariat and the handing over of the French proletariat firmly bound to the chariot of French imperialism by means of the slogans of "L'Union Sacree" (civil peace) and "national defense." But, many workers think possibly there is a ray of hope in the French Communist Party, which has grown from 15,000 members in 1934 to 90,000 today. Has the CP been able to influence the People's Front—we have seen that it has not, or has the CP been able to uphold a revolutionary line in spite of its unprincipled participation in a bloc with the bourgeoisie—or has the People's Front been able to influence the CP? There is no better place to turn for an answer to this important question than to the Manifesto of the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of France, published in L'HUMANITE of Jan. 28, 1936.



What is wrong with these slogans? Simply that they are completely non-revolutionary, and, in effect, counter-revolutionary. Marxists do not want to save the "French people" because that includes the capitalist class. The revolution appeals to the proletariat, because the proletariat is the only revolutionary class in modern society. To appeal to the nebulous "people" means to blur and to ignore the class divisions in modern society. It means to preach and to practice class-collaboration. Similarly, to raise the slogan of a "free, strong and happy France" means to support bourgeois France, to fight for its rehabilitation, and to renounce the class struggle.

### A Manifesto For Civil Peace

Since this is the keynote to the entire manifesto, it is not surprising that there is no class analysis contained in it at all. The Communist Party of France is not against the French capitalist class, but is against "the two hundred ruling families that would destroy our beautiful country." These two hundred families are not, of course, in the eyes of the Stalinists the product of capitalism and the dominant section of the bourgeoisie. Hence the CP can speak of removing these two hundred families without destroying capitalism--- and that is quite acceptable to the liberals of the Radical Socialist Party. The social-patriotic tone of the manifesto is nauseating to anyone who has read the COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, or remembers what the Communist International represented in the days of Lenin. Imagine Lenin speaking of "our beautiful country", or "wanting to save the French nation," or appealing to the "workers, employees, peasants, functionaries, small business men and artisans, intellectuals, and ex-soldiers, men, women, children to unite for peace and to defend ourselves against those who are responsible for the poverty and insecurity of our country!"

The following are some of the choice bits of nationalism, chauvinism, patriotism, and open class-collaboration that characterize the present position of the Communist Party of France: "For the defense of liberty by the immediate application of the law for the dissolution of the fascist leagues and by taking action against the factional chiefs who provoke murder and violence against the people, etc;" "For the defense of peace by the collaboration of the peoples by means of the organization of collective security including all countries." The measures for the "defense of the workers' bread" are the same as those of the People's Front and can be summed up as attempts to reform capitalism by relieving those who have suffered from the crisis. The CP has apparently forgotten that in order to put an end to the crises it is necessary to put an end to capitalism. It is "fascism which causes war" -- not capitalism. "The two hundred families want civil war" and the Communist Party does not want civil war even though it sneaks in a mention of a Soviet Republic. How a Soviet France is to be established without civil war is something that only the Stalinists can answer. The revolutionists unequivocally states that the only way to establish a Soviet France, a workers' government, is through civil war. Hence, the Communist Party is for the "reconciliation of Frenchmen." And, "that is why the Communist Party whose every action tends to serve the people, and whose members look for neither personal advantage nor ministerial portfolios, is the party of THE UNITY OF THE FRENCH NATION."

The decadence of the Communist Party is further expressed by the appeals to the glorious traditions of the French proletariat, which, according to the CP is the heir of 1793, by the appeals to the French intellect, by idealizing Communism, etc. "The unity of the French nation alone can give back to France the radiance that she has lost. Only this unity can stop the chorus into the



abyss and make our country, which we love, a country strong from the love it inspires in all the people."

### Unity - For What ?

If the reader still has a ray of hope in the revolutionary potentialities of the C.P., let him ponder carefully the last part of the Manifesto, which we quote in full: "FRENCH PEOPLE, it is for your salvation that we call upon you for union. The Communist Party, heir of Babeuf, of Jaures, Guesde, and all the pioneers of Socialism, calls upon you to unite, to struggle with it under the flag of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, for your defense today and for your freedom tomorrow. Forward, for the unity of the French people in the struggle against the two hundred families. Forward under the flag of the People's Front, for bread, for peace and for liberty ! Forward for a France, free, strong and happy !"

There is no longer any pretense at revolutionary policy in the pages of L'Humanité or in the agitation of the CP. At the present time, in days of war crisis, L'Humanité is cut down to six pages and loaded with advertisements, sport pages, articles on science, etc. The only thing that remains Communist in the French Communist Party is the name, and that will not remain for long as the organic unity (merger) between the CP and the SP is on the order of the day. The only thing that holds up the merger, since the policies of the CP and the SP are at bottom open class collaboration, is the question of dividing up the posts between the two bureaucracies. The trade unions have already merged and the CP has even renounced its right to build its own fractions. In fact, the Stalinists openly collaborate with the Jouhauxs and the stalwart defenders of capitalism against the interests of the proletariat and the masses.

One of the greatest betrayals in history is being prepared by the People's Front with the conscious aid of the Communist Party, pursuing the anti-Marxist line of Stalinism and its latest phase of degeneration as formulated by the Seventh World Congress. However, the People's Front must fall apart as the crisis matures. Signs of it already appear in the desire of the SP and Herriot-Flandin to negotiate with Hitler, while the CP, of course, remains loyal to the Franco-Soviet Pact. The prospects of revolution or counter-revolution in France will be further analyzed in the next issue where we shall examine the program of the SP and the trade-unions. In future articles of this series, we shall examine the prospects for an independent revolutionary party in France, the growth of the fascists and the growing polarization of the classes, and shall keep our readers informed of the effects of the present election and the day-to-day developments in the present pre-revolutionary situation in France, upon which may rest the outcome of the next period of the international class-struggle.

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### OUR POSITION ON THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU FOR REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST UNITY (IAG)

The basic task of the world proletariat today is the building of the new Fourth, Communist International. In the process of regroupment that is taking place the principled revolutionary position on organization remains that of Lenin: "Unite the revolutionists---break politically and organizationally with the reformists and centrists." But the general principle statement alone is not enough---we must show concretely how this is to be done in the existing situation on a national and international scale. In relation to centrist



groupings, fraction work alone is not enough. This must be supplemented by contact of organization with organization thru participation in joint discussions where political agreement appears possible, thru concrete proposals for and joint action in trade union work, anti-war work, etc., and the necessary criticism by the independent revolutionary organization.

A fundamental principle of the prospective merged group must be the maintaining of its independence at all times. This teaching of Marxism that the organization of the vanguard, be it the new group or the party, must retain its independence has been borne out historically in lessons of blood. It is the reason for our categorical rejection of Trotsky's "French Turn". We do not join an organization unless we are willing to accept its program—that is, unless we agree on all principle questions—and its discipline. For, if we violate this principle, then, regardless of our intentions, our hands are tied and our work is fatally handicapped.

Therefore, it is self-evident that we could not propose affiliation to the IAG if this meant the liquidation of our independent revolutionary organization, or the acceptance of the discipline and program of a non-revolutionary organization. The IAG is a loose-federation of reformist, centrist and revolutionary groupings, and tendencies having no program and no binding decisions. None of the participating organizations (which include tendencies towards the Second, Third, 2½ Organic Unity, and Fourth Internationals) takes responsibility for the program or policies of any or all of the other organizations. In a word, the IAG is a letter-box to which the great majority of the correspondence are reformists and centrists.

Thus the question really is: "How best to aid the clarification and differentiation amongst the parties of the IAG so as to separate the revolutionists from the reformists and centrists and help in the building of the new International revolutionary center?" We recognize clearly that the IAG is not and cannot become the propaganda and organizing center for the Fourth International, but that a new center must be created from the scattered Marxist forces which will be independent of the Second International, Third International, IAG, and ICL. Can we best accomplish our purpose by a policy of affiliating to the IAG or by simply turning our backs on it?

We believe that we can expect more results from a policy of joining the IAG than from a policy of abstention. To ignore the possibilities of work in the IAG is sectarian, and will isolate the Marxist vanguard. To say that it is possible to work in the IAG without joining it—i.e., by fraction work alone—does not answer the question. For fraction work can and should be done in the parties of the IAG, but this alone would mean to ignore the meetings of the IAG. It is impossible to have a fraction in the IAG because the IAG is not an organization with a program, disciplined and common action but a letter-box. To say that our joining the IAG would strengthen the reformist and centrist elements and engulf the revolutionists is equally unconvincing. Since when have Marxists been afraid of pitting their small numbers and correct theory against reformists and centrists in ideological combat, once their organizational and political independence is assured? To believe that we would strengthen the prestige of the IAG by joining is idealism and fails to take into account the realities of our functioning as revolutionaries, once inside.

We certainly do not propose to remain passive once we have entered the IAG and simply permit them to claim one more adherent, and a revolutionary member at that. On the contrary, we expect to utilize the IAG as a sounding-board for our Marxist policies. As an independent revolutionary force we shall be able to raise



the question of the Fourth International, a united front movement against imperialist war, social-patriotism, and the national-defenseism and other issues which would help the revolutionary elements inside the parties of the IAG to-gether with ourselves to clarify and differentiate amongst the elements of the IAG and ultimately to break it up and unite the revolutionists into the new international revolutionary center. Naturally, we would not work in the IAG as the Trotskyites (RSAP) did by issuing ultimatums. Not to join the IAG would mean to leave the revolutionary and centrist elements in the parties of the IAG to their fate and to perpetuate the isolation of the scattered and small Marxist vanguard, instead of co-operating with the revolutionists (who are in a minority and have few or no delegates) in such parties as the SAP, ILP, Workers Party of Marxist Unification of Spain, etc.

We propose that the merged organizations decide upon the question and the conditions of affiliation to the IAG. To us the principle involved is the attitude and relations of revolutionaries towards other revolutionary forces and towards centrist groupings. The carrying out of this principle is a question of what tactics to pursue, in this case the joining of the IAG, and can conceivably permit of differences.

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The forgoing statement was presented by the LRWP to the joint subcommittees of the RWL, ILFC, and LRWP as our position on the IAG. Taken in connection with the joint statement of the three organizations on the "World Labor Movement" and the road to the Fourth International, it indicates that we are in agreement with the other two organizations on the principled question of approach to the IAG, but differ as to tactics.

Certain points that have come up in discussion among the organizations involved can be dealt with as follows:

1. Beginning with the fact of the weakness of the revolutionary organizations, the question is, "What is the road to the large sections of advanced workers who are breaking with reformism and have not reached the point of supporting a revolutionary position?" We are opposed to accepting the political and organizational discipline of reformists and centrists, and therefore to the merger of revolutionary organizations into reformist and centrist organizations (Trotsky's "French Turn"). We propose that revolutionists reach those workers who are breaking with reformism, who are following centrist organizations in loose federations (IAG). In our joint statement "for the Fourth International" (pg. 8 of this issue), we refer to "A loose federation of a centrist character like the London Bureau composed of a heterogeneous group of organizations which have in common only the fact that they have broken with the Second and Third Internationals..." In this federation we must raise over and over again on each concrete issue the question of the Fourth International. That is why we propose affiliation to the IAG: in order to bring forward our revolutionary propaganda, to make concrete proposals based on revolutionary policy, to raise those issues which are most burning and draw the lines sharper between revolutionists on the one hand and centrists and reformists on the other. Such are the questions of war, the People's Front, the electoral bloc policy in Spain, the revolutionary policy on the defense of the Soviet Union, the struggle against fascism.

This was Lenin's policy toward the Zimmerwald Conference in 1915, which originated as a movement away from and against the Second International. He was willing to distribute the Zimmerwald Conference's statement in spite of his disagreements with it, precisely because he was in no way politically or organizationally subordinated to the Conference, and could distribute his criticisms together with



the statement of Trotsky, Rakowski, and other adherents of the slogan of the Third International retained their organizational affiliation with Zimmerwald until the opening of the First Congress of the Third International in 1919, precisely because thereby they could work within the Zimmerwald set-up for the Third International. Lenin's criteria were: political independence, the relation of forces between revolutionists and centrists, and the decline or upswing of the revolutionary movement. Based on all these criteria, the tactics of today call for affiliation to the IAG.

2. There is not in existence today an international organizing and propaganda center for the Fourth International. It is the task of revolutionists to build one. One approach to this task is the concrete agitational and propagandist work of revolutionary organizations within the IAG. Paper organizations such as the "Contact Committee of the Signers of the Open Letter of Five", paper agreements such as the Declaration of Four, correspondence among groups who have no mass base cannot take the place of this work. Revolutionary work in mass organizations is indispensable to the development of a revolutionary group, but does not take the place of propaganda and agitation work on a national or international scale among large centrist organizations who can be reached through their loose federations.

3. The minority opposition work of revolutionists as a fraction within the individual organizations comprising the IAG is no substitute for affiliation, although it is useful and necessary provided that the independence of the revolutionary organization is maintained. So long as the revolutionary fraction remains a minority, it will ordinarily not be represented on the floor of the IAG conferences, and its voice will not be heard. On the other hand, a revolutionary organization affiliated with the IAG can reach the memberships of all the affiliated organizations through its statements, proposals, motions, and actions. In this way it can contribute to the work of clarification, differentiation, and political and organizational separation of the revolutionists within the centrist organization from the reformists and centrists. This is a definite road to building the international revolutionary center, not excluding but reinforcing the independent development of the revolutionary organizations who stand clearly on the line of the Fourth International.

4. Trotsky's opposition to affiliation to the IAG is the obverse side of the "French Turn" policy. The sectarian policy of "a little group but my own" can be carried out in isolation from the masses, or by opportunistic liquidation into the masses, but is incompatible with the independent organizational, agitation and propagandist activity of a revolutionary organization which develops in the closest contact with the masses. A revolutionary group which displays initiative, leadership and activity cannot be run bureaucratically from above, cannot be kept isolated from the organized or unorganized masses, and cannot be driven into panicky liquidation. It will inevitably try to influence other organizations and take full advantage of every opportunity which the development of the revolutionary movement offers, in this case the existence of large centrist organizations affiliated to the IAG.

5. The conception that the IAG as a whole is moving to the right is maintained by some comrades who also maintain that it is dying. To support both contentions they point to the fact that both the Norwegian Labor Party (NAP) and the Doriot group have left the IAG. But if differentiation and separation within the IAG have proceeded so far that two of the substantial supports of the right wing have had to break with it, so much the better. This does not constitute a

movement to the right. The fact that the Dutch group (RSAP) broke with the IAG under the whip of Trotsky undoubtedly does weaken the influence of the left wing within the IAG, and shifts the relation of forces unfavorably. Whether this group would have been willing to collaborate with an independent revolutionary force opposed to the "French Turn" and for the Fourth International is another matter. But for this weakening of the "left" within the IAG Trotsky is responsible. All the greater are the responsibilities and opportunities for work within the IAG for the revolutionary elements who support the Fourth International line and oppose Trotsky's opportunist line. They must take the initiative and not be mere passive spectators of the development of the IAG.

As to the "dying" of the IAG, the latest bulletin (April, 1936) lists the following affiliated parties:

- Socialist Party of Sweden
- Independent Labor Party of Great Britain
- Socialist Workers Party of Germany
- Socialist Party (Maximalist) of Italy
- Workers Marxist Unity Party of Spain
- Independent Socialist Labor Party of Poland
- Left Socialist Movement of Bulgaria
- United Socialist Party of Rumania

The IAG also claims "close contacts with revolutionary socialist groups" in twenty-one other countries including colonial countries.

The question of the IAG has been among the most discussed of any in the joint meetings of the three organizations. From our point of view this discussion has been fruitful, in that it has resulted in a principled agreement which takes a sharp position against sectarianism in regard to centrist organizations, and shows the connection between sectarianism and opportunism as against revolutionary policy. We have reason to believe therefore that the differences on the question of affiliation to the IAG will not be reproduced on a whole series of questions and thus constitute a whole principled line of disagreement. For this reason we have been actively furthering the continuation of joint discussions and practical collaboration among the three organizations concerned with a view to testing the possibilities of basic political agreement and consequently organizational fusion.

National Bureau

LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

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